

Welcome to our Summer 2 Wellbeing Newsletter

alts.northants.sch.uk



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Welcome to our 'Wellbeing at ALTS' newsletter. Each term, we aim to share with you services, support and practical advice that you can use to support your child's positive wellbeing. This term's edition is focused on sharing information about transitions as part of looking after our mental health and wellbeing.

This week our pupils will be having their transfer day. This might be visiting our school for the first time, or spending time in their new class if they already attend our school. Or, for our Year 6's, it will be visiting their new secondary schools.

Change can bring up tricky emotions. We hope that the information in this newsletter is helpful.



TRANSITIONS

Young people go through all kinds of changes as they grow up – including when they move into a new class, go to secondary school, move to a new house or area, or experience changes within their family.

These times of transition can be exciting. However, they can also be stressful, worrying or upsetting.

Change can be difficult when a young person does not want it to happen:

As a parent, there are a number of things you can do to support your child...

- ♦ Get interested in what your child is doing.
- ♦ Open up conversations about what they're involved in.
- ♦ Maintain hobbies and routines.
- ♦ Be a sense of hope by encouraging them.
- ♦ See what kind of things you can maintain, whether it's hobbies, family favourites or routines. These will provide a safety net if your child is struggling or finding it hard to cope with the change that is around them.

From [www.Young Minds.org.uk](https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/transitions-and-times-of-change) <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/transitions-and-times-of-change>

Starting School

Have a look at this short video clip and webpage about your child starting school from Place2be: <https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/helping-your-child-when-they-start-or-change-primary-school>



These video clips offers advice to parents of children about to start Secondary school: <https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/helping-your-child-prepare-for->



Know what affects your child, what makes them grumpy, hyper, disconnected...

Do they need snacks throughout the day?
Do they need lots of sleep?
Do they need to get out and about and do exercise?
Do they need time alone?

Trust that you know your child and give them the basics that they need to cope with difficult days

Share ideas about how to:

- create action plans
- have a problem-solving approach
- enjoy achievements
- be forward-looking
- show them that we can all get things wrong

Encourage independence:

- help them to move positively from child identity towards teen identity
- increase their responsibilities
- be positive whenever they act maturely

Be aware of your child's changing needs. Sometimes it might feel like one step forwards, two steps back.

Be calm

Try to stay calm whilst your child is feeling distressed.

Your child may show:

- highs and lows
- blame
- melodrama
- self-centredness
- anger

Communicate

The small things you do make all the difference:

Keep talking, texting, listening, hearing, hugging, sympathising, smiling, reassuring, checking, sharing, suggesting, encouraging, respecting

Get learning

Be involved, find out more and talk about:

- social media
- internet benefits and dangers
- new music
- language and slang
- current affairs
- what it's like to be young in the current world

Be wise

As they discover new things, try to:

- be interested
- be non-judgemental
- guide
- give boundaries
- see it from all sides
- listen to their point of view
- choose your words carefully
- act on warning bells

Be the anchor

In times of change you are:

- constant
- family
- familiar
- routine
- in-jokers
- irritating
- comforting
- home

Have fun

Provide lots of light relief:

- be silly
- be embarrassing
- play games
- laugh together
- do stuff together
- make jokes
- make things
- be outside

Look after yourself

Support yourself, to best support your child:

- lean on friends
- offload on other family
- find 'me time'
- see the GP
- relax, exercise, sleep well, eat well
- remember tomorrow is a new day

YM Parents Helpline
0808 802 5544

Ten Ways for parents to help children cope with change

Preparation for secondary school



1

Promote

Independence



- Secondary school will demand a greater sense of independence from your child than they are used to, so encouraging self-reliance is important
- Once school starts, try developing independent organisation by listing what is needed for each day
- Get them into the habit of completing homework, checking their school planner and preparing their own uniform, equipment and bag each evening
- Show your child that you trust them to manage and organise themselves on their own

2

Get

Prepared



- Preparation will help build their own skills and confidence
- Be aware of the school policies on things like uniform, jewellery, hairstyles, piercings and mobile phones
- Find out how the canteen and payment system at the school work and talk this through with your child
- Plan what will happen on the first day and any scenarios they may encounter e.g. getting lost, making new friends
- Ensure that all paperwork is completed and that important upcoming dates have been noted

3

Show

Positivity



- Many parents and carers feel anxious when their child starts a new school but try to stay cheerful and optimistic
- Acknowledge any anxiety your child may be feeling and point out that those feelings are normal
- Encourage them to join clubs and become involved in school life. This can be a good way to make friends with pupils in other forms and year groups

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Be

Organised



- Try to get organised over the summer rather than leaving it to the last minute, which can be stressful for both parent and child
- Purchase the correct uniform, get a haircut and buy new stationery
- Secondary students often travel independently for the first time. Do some trial runs - first with you, then perhaps solo or with a friend
- Work out the first day plan. Your child may prefer to go with you to start, or to meet a friend
- Discuss the timetable together and what lessons they have
- Make lists of equipment they will need for each lesson

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Get

Familiarised



- Find out when the school is offering Year 6 transition days
- Purchase a school map to share the layout of the school with your child
- Arrange extra familiarisation days if your child is vulnerable or anxious
- Arrange to meet the SENCO and support staff and look around in a quieter environment
- Look at the school's website with your child
- Take note of any key dates or events

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Keep

Talking

- Remember to communicate regularly with your child and discuss their concerns openly
- Speak with your child about the expectations of secondary school
- Talk to them about how they coped with changes and transitions in the past
- Mealtimes or bedtimes can be a good time to discuss what has happened during the day and find out how they are feeling in a relaxed way
- Stay actively engaged in your child's school life. Attend school events, read newsletters and stay in touch

Share &

Communicate



- When children are worried or frightened, they want to stay close to their caregivers.
- It's completely normal for younger children to feel anxious about separating.
- It's also good because it keeps them safe as they learn to manage new experiences.

▲ How you might be feeling

- You can feel anxious when leaving your child. You may worry about whether they will be ok – this is completely normal.
- When your child is incredibly upset, you're likely to get upset too.
- You may also feel frustrated or embarrassed by their behaviour. Or find it hard to think straight - making it hard to 'listen' to what their behaviour is telling you.
- And that can make your child more upset, so things get worse, instead of better.
- It can feel suffocating when your child won't leave you alone. Or if they want your attention all the time. Sometimes the more you need space the more your child seems to need you.
- And, when you try to leave them at school, or with someone else, it's hard if they're screaming and clinging to your knees.

▲ Some things to try that can help

- Think about what might be behind their fears, you know them best.
- If they're shy, try a gentle, step-by-step introduction to new things.
- If something's unsettled them recently - give them lots of time and reassurance.
- Give them some exclusive one to one time every day when you're not on your phone or busy doing other things. A little time goes a long way towards helping your child feel safe.
- Show them you understand their feelings, say: 'It's hard saying goodbye, isn't it? But I will be back on Monday and you can have fun while I am gone!'

Supporting your child to be ready to return to school after the Summer holidays

- Start to get back into bedtime and wake up routines in the last week before the holiday ends. This helps your child/ren to be ready for the start of the school term.
- If you are buying any new uniform, buying early in the holidays will give your child/ren a chance to try it on and practise getting used to it.
- This will also give them and you time to sort out any difficulties with labels, collars and sleeves.
- If your child needs new shoes—wearing them inside for a while can help ease any rubbing on heels.

Look out for our next Wellbeing at ALTS newsletter due out in the Autumn term